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Letter dated 7 September 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 6 September 2007 (see annex), addressed to you by Murat Soysal, Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the representation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, forwarding the letter of Turgay Avcı, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of Mr. Avcı's letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 19, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Baki **İlkin**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 7 September 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey herewith a copy of the letter dated 3 September 2007 addressed to you by Turgay Avcı, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see enclosures).

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 19, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Murat **Soysal**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

Enclosures

I have the honour to bring to your kind attention the ongoing Greek Cypriot efforts to procure 41 new battle tanks for the Greek Cypriot National Guard (GCNG), which has widely been reported in the Greek Cypriot media (Please find enclosed the news items from the Greek Cypriot dailies, Politis and Cyprus Mail respectively). In this context, I also wish to redraw your attention to my letter of 25 December 2006 addressed to you with regard to the ongoing rearmament programme of the Greek Cypriot side.

The unabated rearmament efforts of the Greek Cypriot administration at an accelerating pace is of serious concern to us, since this is a time when all efforts should be concentrated on gaining momentum vis-à-vis the efforts for a comprehensive settlement under your good offices mission. Unfortunately, while the Turkish Cypriot side is working on moving ahead with cooperation between the two sides in order to pave the way for negotiations for a just and lasting settlement, the Greek Cypriot side is working incessantly on bolstering its military power. It is clear that the steps taken by the Greek Cypriot administration to procure 41 battle tanks, as part of its rearmament programme, casts a shadow on the sincerity of the Greek Cypriot leadership's engagement in the process of negotiations between the two sides and raises serious doubts.

The allocation of massive amounts of financial resources by the Greek Cypriot side for new arms purchases, modernization and reconstruction of military facilities from its annual budgets reveals that its true intention is not to create a positive atmosphere but to boost its military capability. So as to shed light on the level of rearmament of the Greek Cypriot administration, I deem it necessary to state that its total military expenditure for 2006 was in excess of 400 million United States dollars and its military expenditure per capita is one of the highest in the world.

In addition to its increasing rearmament efforts, the conclusion of bilateral agreements regarding the delimitation of a maritime jurisdiction area in the Eastern Mediterranean with neighbouring countries, the signing of an "Agreement in the Field of Defence" with France, in its purported capacity as the "Government of Cyprus", and the ongoing unauthorized selling and granting of military material originating from the United States of America to the GCNG by Greece under the pretext of the joint military doctrine signed between Greece and the Greek Cypriot administration are just a few examples of the ongoing provocative policies of the Greek Cypriot side. Such actions are not only likely to lead to tension and instability in the island but also to complicate efforts towards a comprehensive settlement. It should also be kept in mind that the GCNG is an entity established contrary to the 1959-1960 international Cyprus treaties and the Constitution of the 1960 partnership Republic, and its crimes committed against the Turkish Cypriot people between 1963 and 1974 are well recorded in United Nations documents.

I hope and trust that the international community would take the necessary steps expeditiously to discourage the Greek Cypriot side from continuing its militarization campaign as well as all other provocative policies. I also expect that the Greek Cypriot side will be urged to adopt policies which will help to build confidence between the two peoples and be conducive to facilitating the efforts aimed at reaching a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus issue under your mission of good offices.

In concluding, I would like to reiterate our firm commitment to a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem under your good offices mission and on the basis of the United Nations Comprehensive Settlement Plan.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 19, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Turgay **Avcı**
Deputy Prime Minister
and Minister for Foreign Affairs

Forty-one new tanks for Greek Cypriot National Guards

POLİTİS (8 August 2007) reports under the front-page headline, "41 New Tanks for Greek Cypriot National Guard [GCNG] – Bids are being assessed for AMX30 or T 80 tanks – Russia-France after 40 million". The paper wrote that Greek Cypriot National Guard is to be strengthened soon with 41 new tanks and bids for these tanks by Russian, French and Ukrainian companies are under consideration.

The paper featured the story extensively with pictures and wrote that the process for the purchase of new tanks had started ten months ago and it is at the stage of completion. It added that Russian "Rosobonexport" company and a Ukrainian company bid for T 80 tanks and the French "GIAT" company bid for the AMX30 B2 tanks.

The paper reported that at the initial stage the German "Krauss-Maffei Wegman (KMW)" company also showed some interest for the "Leopard" tanks but did not file a bid. As a result of this, the paper commented that arms purchase by South Cyprus will develop along the Russian-French axis.

According to the story; a source from the Greek Cypriot Defense Ministry stated that it will be easy to make a decision, because there are already T 80 tanks (they were purchased in 1996 as part of the joint "military" doctrine) and AMX30 B2 tanks (purchased in 1980) in the GCNG inventory.

The story stressed that thermal cameras have been installed by the French "THALES" company to the AMX30 B2 tanks which are in the GCNG inventory. The paper wrote that even though there are thermal cameras in the T80K tanks, the T 80U type tanks do not have such cameras.

The cost of the purchase of the concerned tanks are estimated to be 40 million CYP and as soon as the decision is taken as to which tanks will be purchased; the Greek Cypriot Defense Ministry will take the issue, during the Greek Cypriot Parliament's new legislation period, to the relevant committee.

Based on the information it collected, the paper commented that the Greek Cypriot government wishes to realize the purchase of the concerned arms as soon as possible; because there is a possibility that in the wake of the coming Greek Cypriot presidential election, the current government might be accused for doing nothing to strengthen the GCNG.

The paper also wrote that in view of the cancellation of the purchase of artillery for GCNG and the fact that MI 35 helicopters completed their flight periods; the Greek Cypriot Parliament's Defense Committee approved 10 million CYP for the maintenance of these helicopters two weeks ago.

The paper also wrote that the tender for the purchase of 330 vehicles of different types (mostly trucks) is pending and the said tender was suspended in 2005 for the second time on the grounds of corruption.

Cyprus is "looking to buy new tanks"
Russia, France and Ukraine in the running

Cyprus Mail (9 August 2007)

Officials were quiet yesterday on reports that the Defence Ministry was planning to purchase 41 new tanks for £40 million.

Politis reported that the tenders' board was evaluating offers by French, Russian and Ukrainian companies for the tanks. It said the applications were at an advanced stage having begun 10 months ago.

The Russian company Rosobonexport was named for the supply of T80 tanks. The others were said to be the French firm GIAT to supply AMH30 V2 tanks and an unnamed Ukranian company that would also supply T80s.

Politis said that for the first time, a German company, Krauss-Maffei Wegmann (KMW), had also expressed an interest in supplying Leopard tanks following the lifting of the German embargo on arms sales to Cyprus last December due to Cyprus' EU membership. However, an application was not submitted in the end.

Sources in the Defence Ministry told the paper that all the possibilities would be taken into consideration when it came to choosing the tanks, such as suitability and technical back-up and support.

Because the issue should go to Parliament, Politis said it contacted members of the House Defence Committee who said they had not been briefed that the National Guard was seeking new tanks, other than a reference in the budgets last December.

Neither Defence Minster Chrisodoulos Pashiardis nor Government Spokesman Vassilis Palmas could be reached for comment on the report yesterday.